



SUMMER 2025

Message from the CCA President

Welcome back to another summer season! After a classic Canadian winter and a busy spring clean-up, we've finally made it to the time of year we all look forward to for relaxing at the cottage.

Have you ever wondered how clean our lake water is? We have the answer. Each year, the Trent Aquatic Research Program (TARP) conducts water testing to monitor the health of our lake. This data is compared with previous years to identify any emerging concerns about water quality.

The Catchacoma Cottagers' Association (CCA) is a proud supporter of this important work. One of our dedicated lake stewards, Jack Millar, is employed by TARP and plays a key role in the testing process. In this newsletter, Jack provides a snapshot of Catchacoma's current water quality. For a more detailed analysis, visit our website at CatchacomaLake.com to view TARP's full 2024 report.

While you're on the website, don't forget to sign up for our family-friendly

canoe and kayak race—the Catchacoma Challenge! It's a fun 2 km paddle from Geale Island to Comstock Island, with prizes for all participants. The race takes place on August 3 at 10 am, the morning after CCA Dockfest, so make sure to rest up and join the fun!

I'd also like to take this opportunity to thank all of our members for their continued support. Your contributions make it possible for us to fund lake stewardship initiatives, maintain our FOCA membership, manage the navigational buoy system, publish this newsletter and host special events. This past June, the CCA also subsidized a CPR/AED training course for members—a great example of how your membership makes a difference.

If you're not yet a member, it's easy to join—just visit our website or stop by the CCA booth at Dockfest.

Wishing everyone a safe, fun and relaxing summer at the lake!

– Ric Mackey, CCA President



Over the CCA's 77-year history there have been many board presidents, including the legendary Foster Hewitt (1963). Last year, a few past presidents got together for a shore breakfast; left to right, Ric Mackey, Leith Rhodes, Wendy Lyttle, Peter van der Velden, Steve Scott and Ian Brown.

BECOME A CCA MEMBER!

Your membership fees help support our many activities on the lake, including:

- Buoy program
- Lake stewardship
- DockFest
- Website, newsletters and emails
- Membership in organizations such as FOCA, CCRAI and CEWF



You get all of these benefits for only \$30 per year!

Visit our website to find out more and to purchase your membership.

www.catchacomalake.com



2025 CCA Board Members

- Ric Mackey, President
- Joe Natale, Past-President
- Richard Watson, Vice-President
- Steve Scott, Treasurer
- Scott Hayzelden, Secretary
- Marnie Welch, Membership
- Ted Spence, Lake Stewardship, CCRAI & CEWF Liaison
- Jason Card, Buoy Master
- Dave Curtis, Marina Liaison
- Jack Millar, Lake Stewardship
- Mitty van der Velden, Government Liaison
- Cristina Natale, Director at Large

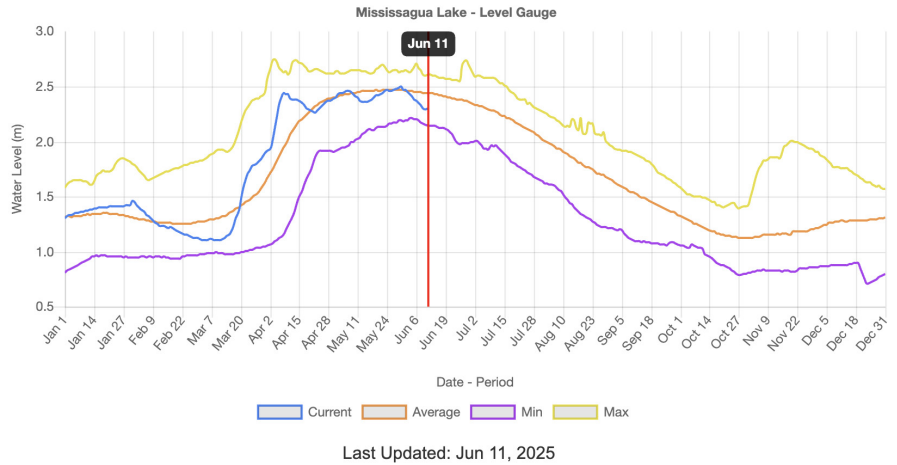
2025 Exceptional Weather and Water Level Challenges

At the time of writing on May 29 our lake is full, as is the entire Trent-Severn Waterway (TSW) system. The waterway is temporarily closed in sections because of high levels and flows. We have had an exceptional winter and spring weather pattern which has presented major challenges for the TSW Water Management Team.

A year ago, we experienced a very dry winter with limited snow, and the TSW began replacing logs in our dam in February to capture the limited snowpack melt. Then above average rain in April and over the summer meant we had a full lake by May and good levels all summer.

In 2025 the situation has been totally different. We had a dry fall and very little snow accumulation. Then a relatively dry January and below average snowpack at month end. But February saw above average precipitation and, by months end, we had a significant snowpack.

March and April presented extreme weather fluctuations including warmer and wetter conditions than normal, some significant rainfall events and very warm periods. Rainfall on melting snow



Visit our website to find the link for the most current data: catchacomalake.com/cottage-living/water-levels

is the condition that leads to the highest and fastest runoff events.

Our lakes peaked on about April 10 after another major rainfall and then began dropping slowly. Ice was out as of April 19. TSW has actively added and removed logs to control outflows in response to continuing extreme rainfall events.

From early April the entire TSW has been full or above full and the Water Management Team has been working

every day to rebalance flows and try to return to normal levels. The Waterway opened for navigation on May 17 but subsequently has had to close sections to navigation because of high flows and levels. Extreme rainfall events have continued and it is a slow process to return levels to normal throughout the system.

Prospects are currently good for normal or above normal water levels on our chain of lakes this summer.

Plankton Study on Catchacoma Lake

A new research study is now underway in the Catchacoma-Mississauga lake system. Jack Millar is a CCA board member and an Honours thesis student working for Dr. Paul Frost, a biology professor at Trent University. Jack is researching what factors affect the abundance and community composition of zooplankton in our lake system. This year-long study will allow them to track seasonal population patterns of certain zooplankton species.

Zooplankton play an important role in the foodweb of an aquatic ecosystem: acting as the bridge in energy and nutrient transfer between algae and fish. Without zooplankton our lakes would be green with algae and we wouldn't have any fish.

However, not all zooplankton are the same. Some species are more aggressive than others, often becoming the dominant zooplankton in some waterbodies.



Close-up of a spiny water flea. Total length is approx. 1 cm (½ in.) including tail. Photo: Adirondack Watershed Institute website.

Spiny water flea (*Bythotrephes longimanus*) is an invasive species of zooplankton found in Catchacoma Lake. Spiny water flea has been known to outcompete native zooplankton and can resist fish predation due to its prominent spine.

Understanding these changes in the abundance and type of zooplankton that are present by season, can help explain long-term changes in our lake system such as the colour of our water, the number of fish we have and ultimately the health of our lake.

Water Quality Update

Catchacoma Lake continues to have good water quality, consistent with previous years of testing.

Many parameters such as algal biomass (chlorophyll-a), and Total Phosphorus (TP) have been found to be well within the range of a healthy lake. High values of chlorophyll-a and TP typically indicate harmful algae blooms.

For more information regarding the water quality of Catchacoma Lake, check out the latest Water Quality Report from the Trent Aquatics Research Program available on our website.



CCA Members are also FOCA Members

Did you know that as a member of the Catchacoma Cottagers' Association (CCA), you're also a member of the Federation of Ontario Cottagers' Associations (FOCA)? It's true! Five dollars of your \$30 seasonal membership fee goes directly to FOCA on your behalf.



Being a FOCA member is one of the smartest ways to stay informed, connected, and protected as a waterfront property owner. FOCA is a not-for-profit organization that represents more than 50,000 families across Ontario, advocating for healthy waterfronts, strong rural communities and responsible property ownership.

But the benefits go well beyond advocacy. FOCA keeps members up to date on environmental issues, invasive species, septic health, lake science and land use planning. These resources help cottagers make informed decisions that protect their property and the natural beauty of our lakes.

Members also enjoy exclusive discounts on cottage insurance, home energy services, and boating safety programs. FOCA also offers newsletters, webinars, and events to keep you connected and engaged.

Most importantly, your FOCA membership strengthens our collective voice. Through FOCA, the CCA can access powerful tools, research and

provincial advocacy to support local issues right here on Catchacoma.

To learn more, visit foca.on.ca and see how your membership makes a difference.

Need help logging in to the FOCA website as a CCA member? Just drop us a line at catchacomalake@gmail.com — we're happy to help!

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

On the Lake

Sailboat Races

Sun Aug 3 & Sun Aug 31, 2 pm, Geale Island

CCA DockFest

Sat Aug 2, Noon – 4, Catchacoma Marina

Catchacoma Challenge Canoe & Kayak Race

Sun Aug 3, 10 am, Geale Island

Cavendish Community Centre

Kids' Storytime ... Every Wed 1:30

Carnival Day ... Sat July 19

Buckhorn Community Centre

Buckhorn Art Festival... Aug 16 & 17

Quilting at the Lakes ... Sep 5 & 6

Fall Craft Show ... Oct 11 & 12

Curve Lake First Nation

Traditional Pow Wow... Sep 20 & 21



Catchacoma Challenge

Are you up for the challenge?

Join us for CCA's thrilling long-distance canoe and kayak race happening the day after DockFest during the long weekend.

Sunday, August 3
10 am start

The 2 km race kicks off at Geale Island and concludes at Comstock Island.

Participation is free and every paddler will receive a prize, with special awards for the winners.

Visit our website to see the different divisions and to register.

CCA VIRTUAL AGM

Wednesday, August 20, 7 pm

All members are welcome to join us online for our Annual General Meeting

Please email us to get the link: catchacomalake@gmail.com



CCA presents...

DOCKFEST 2025

Saturday, August 2 • Noon to 4
Catchacoma Marina

- ★ Live Band
- ★ Barbecue
- ★ Local Artisans
- ★ Information Booths
- ★ Face Painting
- ★ Fire Truck



Sailboat Races

ALL SAILBOATS AND WINDSURFERS WELCOME!

Sunday of every long weekend
2 pm start

Ask Catchacoma Marina Manager Tom for details

Vincent Eastwood and the Story of Eastwood Island

In last year's newsletter, we shared some of the history behind many of the island names on Catchacoma Lake. However, one small island was not covered – Eastwood Island. It's a small island close to the west shore, officially known as Island #7 for emergency services. It has no cottages but does boast a flagpole.

Eastwood Island was originally bought, along with shoreline property, by Lieutenant Vincent McCarter Eastwood. He was a WWI army hero, having received the prestigious Military Cross at Buckingham Palace in April 1917 for "conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty when in command of a raiding party."

Eastwood, like most of the original island owners, was a member of the Ketchecum Hunt Club. During the hunt of 1947, Eastwood was traveling across Catchacoma at night in a motorboat driven by the camp's guide, Theodore Simpson. Gusting winds and high waves caused them to capsize. The camp's cook heard their cries for help and summoned a rescue party. Eastwood was retrieved by a fellow hunter in



Eastwood Island, a small and unassuming island on the west shore, has an interesting and tragic story behind it.

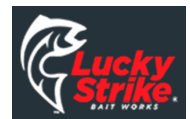
a canoe but Simpson unfortunately disappeared. Eighteen years later fishermen who had rented a boat from Manley's Landing (now Catchacoma Marina) were trolling in front of the hunt camp and unwittingly pulled in Simpson's boat containing his shinbone. The rest of the skeleton is believed to be still on the bottom of the lake.

This unfortunate story does not end there. Clarence Simpson, Theodore's son, a third-generation hunting guide,

drowned during the hunt of 1973, close to where his father was found. He was travelling alone, crossing the lake in conditions similar to those occurring when his father was lost. His boat was discovered days afterwards but his body eluded searchers for four more years.

Today, Eastwood Island remains uninhabited and stands as a quiet memorial of both its namesake and the stories that are part of Catchacoma Lake's rich history.

Thank You to CCA Sponsors!



Catchacoma Cottagers' Association is committed to making environmentally responsible choices including use of 100% post-consumer recycled paper for this newsletter and biodegradable/compostable bags for distribution.